

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of all grounds of rejection are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. By entry of this amendment, claims 1, 2, 16-19, 21-24, 26, 27, and 29 have been amended, claims 15, 28, and 31-33 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 35-37 have been added. No new matter has been added. As such, claims 1-3, 5-14, 16-27, 29, 30, and 35-37 are pending in this application.

In the Office Action of July 27, 2007, claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-13, 15-21, 23-25, and 27-31 were rejected as being anticipated by Yang (US Pat. No. 6,470,718), and claims 32 and 33 were rejected as being anticipated by Gerow (US Pat. No. 6,212,919). Claims 9 and 22 were rejected as being unpatentable over Yang in view of Meekma et al. (US Pat. No. D469,332), and claims 14 and 26 were rejected as being unpatentable over Yang in view of Gould (US Pat. No. 5,638,707).

In a telephone interview on September 26, 2007, the undersigned discussed several of the above claim amendments and features of the new claims with Examiner Christopher Boswell. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended during this interview. In the interview, Examiner Boswell indicated that the newly amended features of independent claims 1 and 27 and the below identified features of new claims 35 and 36 do not appear to be disclosed in the cited references, as explained in greater detail below.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, as amended, is not anticipated by the above cited reference as features of the claim are not shown or suggested in the reference. For example, amended claim 1 recites a lever arm and a user graspable rotatable knob connected with the lever arm. Yang does not disclose a knob that is connected with a lever arm and is both “user graspable” and rotatable. As such, claim 1 is patentable over the cited reference and is in condition for allowance. Claims 2, 3, and 5-14 are also patentable over the cited reference at least based on direct or indirect dependence on claim 1 and are in condition for allowance.

Claim 27, as amended, is not anticipated by the above cited reference as features of the claim are not shown or suggested by the reference. For example, claim 27 recites a frangible connecting member affixing a cam with an actuating member. The cutout 43 of the button 4 in

Yang, identified in the Office Action as a connecting member, does not exhibit these newly amended features. As such, claim 27 is patentable over Yang and is in condition for allowance. Claims 16 and 17 are also patentable over the cited reference at least based on direct dependence on claim 27 and are in condition for allowance.

New claim 35 is patentable over the above cited references, as features of the claim are not shown or suggested in the references. For example, claim 35 recites a locking member movable to any one of three positions: (1) an unlocked position, wherein said cable is movable within said passageway in either one of an inserting direction and a withdrawing direction opposite the inserting direction; (2) a cinch position, wherein said cable is only movable within said passageway in the inserting direction; and (3) a locked position, wherein movement of said cable within said passageway in either one of the inserting direction and the withdrawing direction is prohibited. Yang does not disclose providing both a cinch position (allowing movement in the tightening direction) and a lock position (prohibiting movement of the cable in the passageway in either direction). In contrast, the specification indicates that the cable of Yang can be pulled to tightly fasten when the lock is “locked” (col. 3, lines 39-44). Meekma, Gerow, and Gould likewise do not disclose these features. As such, claim 35 is patentable over the above cited references and is in condition for allowance. Claims 19-21 and 23-26 are also patentable over the above cited references at least based on direct or indirect dependence on claim 35 and are in condition for allowance.

In the telephone interview, the Examiner suggested that the features of dependent claims 2 and 17, which were similar to the above features of new claim 35, be amended to more clearly describe the features. As such, claims 2 and 17 have also been amended to recite the above features.

New claim 36 is patentable over the above cited references, as features of the claim are not shown or suggested in the references. For example, claim 36 recites a blocking member extending across a passageway, the blocking member being configured to block insertion of a first end of a flexible cable through the passageway in a first direction when the lock mechanism is in the unlocked condition, the blocking member being further configured to permit insertion of the first end of the flexible cable through the passageway in a second direction opposite the first direction. In Yang, the only component blocking insertion of cable 3 is the curved end 20 of hook 27. However, in the lock’s unlocked condition (see Figure 5), is clear of the passageway

and does not block insertion of the cable in either direction. Meekma, Gerow, and Gould likewise do not disclose these features. As such, claim 36 is patentable over the above cited references and is in condition for allowance. Claims 18, 22, 29, 30, and 37 are also patentable over the above cited references at least based on direct or indirect dependence on claim 36 and are in condition for allowance.

In summary, independent claims 1, 27, 35, and 36 are believed to be allowable. Further, the remaining pending dependent claims are allowable at least based on direct or indirect dependence from the corresponding allowable independent claims.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims of this application is respectfully solicited. Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David J. Grover", is written over a horizontal line.

Dated: October 26, 2007

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